DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 380 130 IR 055 433

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TITLE Patent Searching for Librarians and Inventors.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-8389-0641-9
PUB DATE 95
NOTE 96p.
AVAILABLE FROM American Library Association, 155 North Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60606-1719 (ALA Order Code: 0641-0010, $20).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Books (010)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Classification; *Copyrights; Depository Libraries; Federal Regulation; Information Sources; Intellectual Property; *Inventions; Librarians; *Patents; Research; *Systems Analysis; Technology Transfer
IDENTIFIERS *Trademarks

ABSTRACT

Information on patents is provided for librarians and laypersons requiring an understanding of the system and the processes involved. Chapter 1 discusses successful patents; terms and concepts; patent types; copyright; trademark; requirements; patent examiners; patent pending; expiration; patentee and assignee; and reissued patents. Chapter 2 examines misconceptions and myths about patents, noting the topics of risks and rewards; assigning and licensing patents; withholding manufacture; international patents; models; closing the Patent and Trademark Office; patenting by amateurs; and unnecessary and unusual patents. Chapter 3 outlines the following steps of the search procedure: (1) identifying the parts of an invention; (2) searching the "Index to the U.S. Patent Classification"; (3) using the "Manual of Classification"; and (4) defining classifications. The steps of the search procedure are continued in chapter 4 as follows: (5) reviewing the subclass list; (6) locating patents by number; (7) examining patent claims. A summary of the process concludes the chapter. Chapter 5 highlights the following: applying the concepts of intellectual property; copyrights; design patents; patents, copyrights, and trademarks; and trademarks and trade secrets. Patents as an information source are considered in chapter 6. Topics include new directions in the research; the problem of knowing what needs to be invented, but not how to do it; new uses for existing technologies; waiting for devices to be invented; discovering what is patentable; predicting growth industries; examples of delays in technology transfer; and advantages of patents as a research tool. Appendices identify often asked questions and their answers for the amateur inventor; patent and trademark depository libraries in the United States; and patent documents in federal depository libraries. (Contains 15 references.) (AEF)

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